GOD'S GOOD WORLD

Genesis 1:1-15

GOD'S GOOD WORLD

God created all things good.

JESUS CONNECTION

John said about Jesus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created." (John 1:1–3). Jesus is the very Word of God. He created all things, and all creation holds together in Him (Colossians 1:17).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

GRATITUDE – To appreciate what someone has done or given to me.

HEAD

Why is it so significant that God created everything "good," or perfectly?

What are some realities about the world God made that we can be thankful for?

HEART

In Genesis 1:1–15, God reveals Himself as a God of order, purpose and design. How might those qualities help us respond to stress or anxiety about our circumstances or about the world?

How we treat something shows what we really think about it. How do we treat something we are grateful for? How do we treat something we take for granted?

HANDS

We want to demonstrate our gratitude in how we treat our world. Choose one specific thing you will do today to preserve God's creation as a way to show gratitude for what He has made. Record what you will do and how it demonstrates gratitude. *Examples*: Pick up litter, don't use a plastic water bottle, walk or ride your bike for transportation, reuse plastic bags, compliment a friend on a unique gift God gave them, etc.

GOD'S GOOD PEOPLE

Genesis 1:26–31; 2:16–18, 21–25

GOD'S GOOD PEOPLE

God created people uniquely in His image.

JESUS CONNECTION

We constantly fail to reflect God's image in all that we do, but Jesus is the perfect image of the invisible God. He rules wisely over the world and upholds all things by His power. He is the only One who perfectly relates to God and others. And because of Jesus' good work on our behalf—His perfect life, death and resurrection—He alone can restore our broken relationships with both.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

RESPECT – Acting considerately toward people based on their God-given value and worth.

HEAD

After creating the man and woman on the sixth day, what specific commands did God give to humans?

Every human being is made in God's image and is, therefore, worthy of respect. What does it mean to treat someone with respect?

HEART

How should the fact that all humans were created in God's image influence how we treat others?

We rarely struggle to show respect to people (friends, teachers, parents) we like or get along with. But Jesus told us, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father, who is in Heaven" (Matthew 5:44–45). Why would God require us to show the same respect to those we don't like or don't get along with?

HANDS

Think of a friend, family member or someone in your life who you know has an opposite opinion or belief or who has been unkind to you. Give a concrete example of how you can show respect toward this person, since he or she is made in God's image and valuable to Him. Ask God to give you strength to do that.

SIN AND GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Genesis 3:1–7, 14–21

SIN AND GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Sin corrupts all of creation.

JESUS CONNECTION

Eve's promised offspring was Jesus. Jesus was a "second version" of Adam—a truer and better Adam (Rom. 5:14). Jesus did what Adam and Eve should have done—He withstood Satan's temptation. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, ate from a tree and died. Jesus obeyed God by willingly dying on a tree for us (Gal. 3:13) so that we could be released from the curse of sin and death.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

OBEDIENCE – Listening to and following through with instructions from those in authority.

HEAD

What was Satan's aim as he launched into his conversation with Eve?

How did this conversation move from doubt to rebellion against God, and what were the results?

HEART

Name examples of movies, music, influencer posts or television shows where the slogan “follow your heart” or “trust in yourself” is communicated. Is this good or bad advice? Explain.

Because of sin, no one obeys all the time. What things make it more likely for you to obey a teacher or parent? What makes it less likely? How might those same things apply to obeying God?

HANDS

Things would have ended very differently if Eve obeyed God instead of falling for Satan’s scheme. We may not be cursed when we sin, but choosing not to obey God will have consequences. Write some consequences you have experienced for disobeying.

Though we will all be tempted to disobey God, some simple practices can help us resist temptation. We can ask God to help us want to obey Him, pray before we act, read the Bible and refuse to hang out with people who encourage us to make wrong choices. Choose one of these practices (or brainstorm one of your own) and commit to doing it this week. You can even tell your LifeWise teacher for accountability.

SIN AND GOD'S GRACE

God judges sin and provides salvation to those who trust Him.

JESUS CONNECTION

Like Noah, Jesus would one day be the only righteous man found on the earth. Through His obedience, He would provide an ark of salvation to all who would receive it. But unlike Noah, Jesus would succeed all the way to the end in saying to God, "Not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONFIDENCE – Full trust and assurance in the reliability of a person or thing.

HEAD

Having confidence in God is what the Bible calls *faith*. What are some specific ways Noah showed confidence in God? What blessings or benefits did Noah receive as a result of his faith put into action?

Confidence is depending on the strength, resources or wisdom we believe will best get us through. What does it look like to show confidence in ourselves, in others or in God? Is it okay to have confidence in ourselves? In others? Why is having confidence in God the best idea?

HEART

How might our relationships with others look different if we lived each day remembering that, in Jesus, God freely shows us mercy and love instead of judgment?

What qualities does God reveal about Himself in Noah's story (for example, mercy, grace, power, etc.)? Why would those qualities help us have confidence in Him in our hard times?

HANDS

Think of a difficult situation you are dealing with right now. Are you putting your confidence in yourself, in others or in God? How do you know?

Just as Noah spent his life in faith building an ark while the world rejected his message (Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5), we can have confidence in God because He is perfectly powerful, gracious, good, and merciful. He will never fail us. But other people can and do fail us, and we will have to deal with our own failures, too. How should we respond when someone we put our confidence in lets us down? What about when we fail or let ourselves down?

SIN AND GOD'S AUTHORITY

Sin drives people to seek greatness for themselves instead of for God's glory.

JESUS CONNECTION

God confused the language of those who wanted to make a great name for themselves and scattered them. At Pentecost (Acts 2), God enabled Jesus' disciples to declare His praise in many languages to show that He wanted the whole world to know the great name of His Son. One day, God will gather together people from every tribe and language to worship Him in unity.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HUMILITY – Refusing to think of myself as more important than I am.

HEAD

The opposite of humility is pride. In Genesis 11:1–4, how did the people display their pride instead of humility? Be specific.

Even though the people disobeyed God's instructions, His plan endured. What does this tell us about God?

HEART

The Bible is clear that God alone deserves glory, but like the people at Babel, we tend to put ourselves at the center of life. How does prideful thinking steal what belongs to God?

If humility means not thinking of myself as more important than I am, what are some ways we might show that we do think of ourselves as more important than we are?

HANDS

Throughout His life, God's son, Jesus, showed humility by serving others. He washed his friends' feet, fed crowds of people, healed the sick and cared for the poor. Make a list of three specific people in your family, at school or in your community and decide on one way you can humbly serve that person or group. Then, commit to doing those things this week.

SUFFERING AND GOD'S PRESENCE

Job 1:6–12, 20–22; 9:14–16, 32–35

SUFFERING AND GOD'S PRESENCE

God draws near to comfort us when we suffer.

JESUS CONNECTION

Job wanted a mediator when he suffered—someone to bring him and God together. We know there is one who stands between God and man and pleads for us as a man pleads for his friends. Jesus Christ is that man; He is that friend. He said there is no greater love than to give up your life for your friend (John 15:13).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONTENTMENT – Being satisfied with what God has given and not desiring anything more.

HEAD

How do we see Job respond to God in his suffering? How does God respond to Job's questions?

Many times, we won't know why we are suffering. Does the fact that we don't know the reason prove that there is no reason at all? Explain.

HEART

List some ways you have typically responded to suffering or hard times in your own life. Not every response we have to suffering is healthy or positive. What are some healthy and helpful responses we can use when suffering comes?

Choosing contentment is not easy, but it can be learned. The Bible tells us that God knows what we need (Matthew 6:32) and will supply everything we need (Psalms 23:1; Philippians 4:19). Why would focusing on those promises, instead of whatever we think we need, help us be content?

HANDS

Sometimes enduring suffering is easier when someone walks with us. Job found out that God had never left him in his suffering. We can stand with others, too. Think of someone you know who is suffering or going through a tough time in their life. Write out a prayer to God on their behalf. Determine how you will encourage that person this week. (*Examples*: call them, help them with a practical task or chore, take them cookies, send them the prayer you wrote out on their behalf, invite them to church, etc).

GOD MAKES A PROMISE

Genesis 12:1–4, 15:1–6

GOD MAKES A PROMISE

God established a covenant people to reverse the curse of sin.

JESUS CONNECTION

God promised Abraham that the world would be blessed through his descendants. Jesus Christ is the promised descendant of Abraham through whom God will bring salvation to the rest of the world.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HOPE – Expecting God will do what is best in every situation.

HEAD

Hope is the confident expectation and assurance that God is faithful to keep His promises, regardless of life's circumstances. How did God give Abram hope while he waited on God's promises?

Did Abram's hope ever waiver? Explain.

HEART

Hope is what keeps us focused and moving toward our God-given dreams and goals. Hope is what motivates us when things get tough and we want to give up. How can remembering God's faithfulness to you and others in the past bring comfort and hope when you are in the middle of a difficult situation?

God chose Abram and pursued a relationship with him. He does the same for us! How does knowing that God pursues you encourage you to trust in Him?

HANDS

What is one way you can remind yourself to have hope in God when you are going through a difficult situation? Find a Bible verse that will remind you of this unwavering hope we should have even when times are tough. Write it down on a notecard and give it to someone who could also use a reminder that God always keeps His promises. Possible verses for hope: Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 5:3-4; John 16:33.

GOD FORESHADOWS HIS PROMISE

Genesis 22:1–6, 7–14

GOD FORESHADOWS HIS PROMISE

God calls His people to trust Him completely.

JESUS CONNECTION

Isaac's question, "Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?" is ultimately answered when John the Baptist saw Jesus and said, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:36). Just as God provided a ram to take Isaac's place, God provided Jesus to die on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins—and the sins of the whole world."

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SACRIFICE – Giving of myself to help someone else.

HEAD

What was the purpose of God testing Abraham's faith?

What evidence of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice for God do you see?

HEART

How does it make you feel when you give up what you see as valuable—time, money or things—to help someone else?

What does the Bible tell us about God's character? How can that knowledge help you trust Him enough to sacrifice for Him or others?

HANDS

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." Write a note to God telling Him what that verse means to you.

GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PROMISE

Genesis 24:12–19, 23–27, 63–67

GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PROMISE

God works providentially to bring about His purposes.

JESUS CONNECTION

God provided Rebekah as a wife for Isaac because of His covenant promise to bless to the world through Abraham's family. In the same way, God provides the Church, Christ's Bride, to bless the world by sharing about God's plan of salvation through Jesus.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

KINDNESS – Being considerate, generous and compassionate towards others.

HEAD

In Genesis 24:14, Abraham's servant said, "Let the girl to whom I say, 'Please lower your water jug so that I may drink,' and she responds, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels also'—let her be the one you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master." What was the result of this prayer?

How did Rebekah show kindness?

HEART

If we are followers of Christ, we have been called to practice kindness even if it comes at great cost or is seemingly impossible. Ephesians 4:32 says, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” When is it difficult to be kind to someone? When is it difficult to forgive someone?

God was considerate, generous and compassionate to Abraham’s servant. In what ways has God shown kindness to you?

HANDS

God demonstrated the ultimate act of kindness by giving up His only Son to save us from our sins. We do not deserve this extreme generosity and compassion. Think of someone in your life who does not deserve your kindness. Show them compassion and generosity by genuinely helping them with something, giving them something or saying something to them.

GOD RENEWS HIS PROMISE

Genesis 25:21–26, 29–34

GOD RENEWS HIS PROMISE

God's covenant promises are based on His faithfulness, not ours.

JESUS CONNECTION

God's covenant promise to bless the world through the line of Abraham and Isaac was fully realized in Jesus. Specifically, Jesus was born into unusual circumstances and died to save unworthy people from our sin.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

PATIENCE – Being willing to wait.

HEAD

What is an example of patience and an example of impatience in Genesis 25:21–26, 29–34?

What possible explanations can you think of for why Esau was willing to despise his birthright?

HEART

What are examples today of when people aren't willing to wait? Where do you struggle to be patient?

How is God patient with us?

HANDS

Think of an area of your life that you would rather take into your own hands to fix right away. Write Psalm 27:14 on a notecard and put it somewhere you will see it every day (on your mirror, on a notebook, in your Bible, etc.). Say it out loud when you see it and ask God to help you live this out.

“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the Lord.” Psalm 27:14

GOD'S MERCY TO A DECEIVER

Genesis 28:18–20, 25–29

GOD'S MERCY TO A DECEIVER

God is merciful to use even the most unlikely people to build His kingdom.

JESUS CONNECTION

The people of Babel tried to build a tower to reach God, but humans can never reach God on their own. Instead, Jacob's stairway shows that God, in His mercy, planned to reach down to us. He sent Jesus, the true stairway to Heaven (John 1:51). Through His life, death and resurrection, Jesus is the only way back to God the Father (John 14:6).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

MERCY – Choosing not to punish someone who deserves to be punished.

HEAD

What was the result of the deception in Genesis 27? Why did God allow it to happen?

How did God offer mercy to Jacob?

HEART

How do you want to respond when you find out someone lied or deceived you? Why? How do you want others to respond to you when they discover you lied or deceived them? Why?

How do you feel when someone shows mercy to you and doesn't give you what you deserve? Name someone who has done that for you.

HANDS

Think of situations in your circle of friends, your school or your house where someone has done something to you that they should be called out for. Now, think of what it would be like to show them mercy. What would others think? Could this be an opportunity to act the opposite way the world expects? Find a way to show mercy this week, the way God showed mercy to Jacob and to us.

GOD'S NEW NAME FOR JACOB

Genesis 32:24–32

GOD'S NEW NAME FOR JACOB

God is working to change our hearts and give us new identities.

JESUS CONNECTION

God gave Jacob a new name, Israel, to reveal his identity as the father of God's chosen people. It was a mark of both privilege and responsibility. As Christians, we reflect the name of Christ. We receive both the privilege of salvation and the responsibility of serving Jesus.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

TEACHABLE – Being willing to change my mind and actions as I learn.

HEAD

What was Jacob's new name and why was it given to him?

What was Jacob's real struggle?

HEART

What are some ways we might "wrestle" with God today? How do these moments help us be more teachable?

We might be tempted to think God is angry when we wrestle with Him. Why is it important to see these moments as acts of God's grace instead?

HANDS

Are you teachable—willing to change your thoughts and actions as God continues to mold you into who He wants you to be? Ask someone you trust (a close friend, relative, pastor) what areas they see in your life you have been teachable and what areas they see unwillingness to change. Commit to becoming more teachable in an area in which you need to grow.

GOD REDEEMS BETRAYAL

Genesis 37:3–8, 18–28

GOD REDEEMS BETRAYAL

The sin of favoritism and jealousy continues in Jacob's family.

JESUS CONNECTION

Joseph was his father's beloved son who was betrayed by his own brothers and sold into slavery. Jesus is the Father's beloved Son who was betrayed by His own and died on the cross to rescue us from our sin.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SELF-CONTROL – Not acting carelessly on my own impulses, emotions and desires.

HEAD

Suffering is a part of life, but it doesn't prove God isn't real or doesn't care. What caused the suffering in Joseph's family and life? What role do you think sin has in suffering?

How did Joseph's brothers show a lack of self-control?

HEART

Professional athletes have a lot of self-control. They put great time and effort into training their bodies so they will be ready for the next competition. How can you apply that principle in other areas, such as school work, your chores or job or preparing for the future?

Jesus was betrayed by one of His closest followers (Matthew 26:14–15) and abandoned by the rest of His friends (Matthew 26:47, 56) the night before He was crucified. How might the fact that Jesus also suffered and was betrayed help you when you face similar situations?

HANDS

Think about the way you live—do you have self-control when you are angry, sad, jealous or excited? Write down a specific incident when you did not have self-control when you felt one of those emotions. Find a Bible verse to memorize and recite the next time you are angry, sad or jealous. Write it down here and commit to memorizing it for the next week. Recite it to your LifeWise teacher.

GOD REDEEMS ADVERSITY

Genesis 39:1–6, 19–23; 41:14–16

GOD REDEEMS ADVERSITY

God uses Joseph's circumstances and sufferings to accomplish His plans and purposes.

JESUS CONNECTION

Joseph's life pointed forward to Jesus. Like Joseph, Jesus would suffer: He would be betrayed, handed over to captivity, stripped of His robe, unjustly sentenced to death and abandoned. But God was with them: Both were unjustly condemned, but God raised them both to places of honor to accomplish His good plan to bless Israel and all nations (Gen. 12; Phil. 2).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

PERSEVERANCE – Not giving up despite difficulties, failure or opposition.

HEAD

How did Joseph respond to difficult and unfair situations?

How did God use Joseph's circumstances to accomplish His plan?

HEART

Which is easier: continuing to be kind and diligent during difficult circumstances or becoming bitter and giving up? Which did Joseph choose? Explain.

Why do you think God allows you to suffer and go through hard times?

HANDS

The story of Joseph reminds us that God never abandons His people. Write out three specific ways this truth encourages you to persevere in something you are facing this week by completing the following sentence: "Because God never abandons His people, I _____."

Think of a person (or people) in your school or community who is suffering or dealing with difficult circumstances. Find a way to help them persevere. *Examples*: make an encouraging phone call, send a card with a Bible verse, take a bouquet of flowers to someone in the hospital, bake some treats for someone, offer to stay and help a teacher, etc.

GOD OVERRIDES EVIL WITH GOOD

Genesis 42:1–6, 45:4–8, 50:15–21

GOD OVERRIDES EVIL WITH GOOD

God can bring good out of evil circumstances.

JESUS CONNECTION

God used Joseph's brothers' evil deeds for His greater plan of providing salvation from the famine. In the same way, God used the evil injustice of those who crucified His Son, Jesus, to bring about His master plan of providing salvation from sin and death.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

FORGIVENESS – Erasing a debt that another person owes me.

HEAD

How did Joseph respond to his brothers when they came for food the first time? The second time?

Why did Joseph's brothers think they needed to protect themselves from Joseph after Jacob died (Genesis 50)? What did Joseph tell them?

HEART

Give three reasons why we sometimes find it difficult to forgive others who have offended or wronged us.

Why do you think Joseph was able to forgive his brothers for what they did? How can his reasons help us forgive others who wrong us?

HANDS

Since Jesus is the Savior who offers forgiveness to the world, how important is it to take the message of His forgiveness to everyone? What would it look like for you to share that message?

Do you need to extend forgiveness to someone? What step will you take to do that?

GOD HEARS HIS PEOPLE

Exodus 3:2–15, 4:1–5

GOD HEARS HIS PEOPLE

God sees and responds to the oppressed and suffering.

JESUS CONNECTION

God told Moses His name "I AM" to reveal that He is the eternal God. He existed before anything and has no beginning or end. Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the great "I AM," who came to us to save us from sin (John 8:58).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COMPASSION – Recognizing the suffering of others and taking action to help.

HEAD

How did God offer compassion to the Israelites?

How did God respond to Moses' fears at the burning bush?

HEART

How does it encourage you to know that God hears the cries of the oppressed?

The Bible is full of God's calls for us to pay attention to injustice and oppression in our world. List some specific ways that we can become aware of injustice or help those who are suffering in your community.

HANDS

Create a card for someone who is struggling with their mental, physical, spiritual or emotional health. Write a compassionate message filled with the encouragement you would want to hear if you were struggling. Deliver it this week.

GOD FREES HIS PEOPLE

God's people are saved through a substitute.

JESUS CONNECTION

Just as a perfect lamb was sacrificed in order to spare God's people from His judgment in Egypt, so also Jesus Christ is the perfect Passover Lamb who was sacrificed in order to protect us from God's wrath.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COURAGE – Boldly doing the right thing, even in difficult circumstances.

HEAD

What message did God tell Moses to deliver to Pharaoh at the Nile River (Exodus 7:15-18)? Why would Moses need courage to follow God's command?

What instructions did God give the Israelites so that He could pass over their houses during the last plague?

HEART

The Israelites had to show courage to do exactly what God asked of them during very difficult circumstances. Moses had to show courage as he delivered God's words and warnings to Pharoah. How and why were they able to do it? Be specific.

Think of a time you have had to boldly do the right thing in a difficult situation when you may have gotten hurt, rejected or another negative consequence. Were you able to do it? How would knowing God is on your side give you courage in that situation? Explain.

HANDS

"Haven't I commanded you: be strong and courageous? Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). Draw a picture of what you think of when you read this verse. Write the verse below it. Share your picture and verse courageously with someone who may not know that God is always with them, even in difficult circumstances. Be bold in sharing this truth.

GOD DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE

Exodus 13:17–22; 14:1–4, 13–14, 21–22, 26–28

GOD DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE

God protects His people.

JESUS CONNECTION

God made a way of deliverance for His people through the Red Sea. In a similar manner, God made a way of deliverance for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Through faith in Jesus we are saved from sin and death.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

OBEDIENCE – Listening to and following through with instructions from those in authority.

HEAD

God continued His plan to rescue the Israelites from bondage and captivity by leading them out of Egypt. How did He ensure the Israelites knew exactly when and where to go?

Give examples of how the Israelites obeyed God as He led them through uncharted territory.

HEART

In the Bible, obedience is not just blindly following orders. It's based on God's authority and character. He is good and always keeps His promises, so we can trust Him and obey. How might that idea help you obey God and the authorities He's put in your life more willingly?

What are the primary ways God guides and directs His people today? Do you think these ways make it easier or harder to obey Him?

HANDS

True obedience means following through on an instruction completely, but sometimes it's tempting to obey only partway. For example, you may do a chore every other day or only when reminded. Paul encourages us to behave differently in Ephesians 6:7 — "Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to people." Think of 1–2 ways you have been content to obey only partially, and commit to obeying completely this week.

A TEST IN THE WILDERNESS

Exodus 16:2–4, 13–20; 17:3–6

A TEST IN THE WILDERNESS

God's goodness is shown through His sustaining grace toward His people.

JESUS CONNECTION

Moses struck the rock, and water flowed out for the people's salvation in the wilderness. Jesus is the Rock who was struck for our salvation, the Rock whose living water satisfies us forever.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONTENTMENT – Being satisfied with what God has given and not desiring anything more.

HEAD

What did the Israelites complain about?

How did God respond to their complaining?

HEART

The manna God provided was not just satisfying for their physical appetites; it also fed their faith. Has God ever provided everything you needed (nothing more, nothing less) at the perfect time? Explain. How did that experience build your trust in God that He will give you everything you need?

When was the last time you complained about a situation you were in? How does complaining reveal a sense of entitlement on our part?

HANDS

Being grateful for what God has given you is one way to exercise contentment. Find a notebook or staple some blank paper together to create a gratitude journal. Every day, write down at least 2 new things you are grateful for that God has provided for you. Thank Him for those blessings.

A LAW FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Exodus 19:3–6; 20:1–8, 12–17

A LAW FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Our relationship with God influences our relationship with others.

JESUS CONNECTION

The Law shows us how to have a right relationship with God and others. Because of sin, it is impossible to keep the Law. Jesus, the sinless Savior, is the only One who has kept the law of God perfectly. When we trust in Jesus, He gives us His righteousness, or right standing before God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SUBMISSION – Choosing to be under the authority of others.

HEAD

What miracles did God remind the Israelites of before giving them the Ten Commandments? How could a focus on these events help the Israelites continue to willingly submit to God's laws?

Why did God want the Israelites to follow the Ten Commandments?

HEART

What tends to be your motivation to obey God or other authorities (parents, coaches, teachers)? Are those good reasons? Explain.

Submission is always a choice. The Bible says it's easier to submit to God's authority and obey Him when we know Him, love Him and revere Him. Why would knowing God, loving Him and revering Him help us submit to Him? Do you think one area is more important, or are they equal? Which one do you find to be the most difficult?

HANDS

Identify different areas of your life where submission is important, such as at home, in sports or activities, in school and in your community. For each area, list a specific way in which you can demonstrate submission to the person or group who is in charge.

AN IMAGE OF IDOLATRY

Exodus 32:1–14

AN IMAGE OF IDOLATRY

Idolatry happens when we worship something or someone else besides God.

JESUS CONNECTION

When the Israelites sinned, Moses interceded for them, but he was only a temporary mediator. Jesus Christ is the perfect Mediator between God and sinful people, and He faithfully intercedes for His people.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

LOYALTY – Choosing to stay committed, devoted and faithful to someone.

HEAD

While Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments from God on Mount Sinai, the Israelites broke their loyalty to God by doing what?

How did Moses show loyalty to the Israelites?

HEART

God had just rescued the people from slavery in Egypt in miraculous ways. What do you think made the Israelites give up on God instead of staying loyal to Him?

What makes it easy or hard to stay loyal to a friend? What everyday practices make it easier for you to stay loyal (committed, devoted and faithful) to your friends? What would make it easier or harder to stay loyal to God?

HANDS

Even though we can't earn it and don't deserve it, God is always loyal to us because of who He is. He selflessly loves us so much that He sent His own son to die for us. Jesus now intercedes for us like Moses did for the Israelites. God's loyalty to love us promises to never abandon those who believe in Him.

Create a physical reminder (a necklace, bracelet, art piece, note on your bathroom mirror, etc.) to remind you of God's loyalty. When you see it, think about who God is and ask Him to help you stay committed, devoted and faithful to Him, the One who made you and loves you unconditionally.

LESSON 22: WHOLEHEARTEDNESS
A PLACE FOR GOD'S PRESENCE

Exodus 36:2–7, 39:42–43, 40:34–38

A PLACE FOR GOD'S PRESENCE

God desires to be near His people.

JESUS CONNECTION

God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle so He could dwell with them. God wants to be with His people. For this reason, God would later send His Son to "tabernacle," or dwell, with us in order to bring us into His presence.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

WHOLEHEARTEDNESS – Complete dedication in everything I do.

HEAD

What did the Israelites build and why?

Why did Moses have to tell them to stop giving?

HEART

Colossians 3:23 says, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." How dedicated are you to cleaning your room with your whole heart? What about doing your homework? Practicing a sport, activity or hobby? Giving your time to help a neighbor? What keeps you from doing these (or other things) wholeheartedly?

Is it important to do EVERYTHING wholeheartedly? Why or why not?

HANDS

This week, pick one area from the list below that you will commit to doing more wholeheartedly and write down 2 specific ways you can put that commitment into practice.

- Relationships (choose one sibling, friend, parent, etc.)
- School and homework (choose one class or teacher)
- Praying (talking) to God
- Helping someone in your family who needs it
- Giving any of your resources (time, money, skills) to serve others

A PICTURE OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 16:2–6, 15–22

A PICTURE OF ATONEMENT

God provides atonement for the people's sins.

JESUS CONNECTION

Aaron was an imperfect high priest who was required to sacrifice a lamb every year. This sacrifice would make atonement for, or cover, the high priest's own sin and the sin of God's people. Jesus is the perfect High Priest who made atonement for sin once for all time with His own blood on the cross.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

MERCY – Choosing not to punish someone who deserves to be punished.

HEAD

What was the purpose of observing the Day of Atonement?

How did the high priest act as a mediator between God and the people? How has Jesus done the same thing for us?

HEART

Access to God's presence was still limited—most Israelites would never set foot in the Most Holy place. Yet God's original plan was not to dwell *near* His people, but *with* His people. Our sin built a barrier between us and God. How did God show us mercy to break down the barrier?

We do not deserve God's mercy, but He gives it freely. Because God is merciful to us, we can show underserved mercy to others who hurt us. What could that look like in your family? Your school? In your community?

HANDS

Think of someone (other than God) who has forgiven you without any penalty or punishment for what you did to them. Even if it was unintentional, if you hurt them and they forgave you without any kind of penalty, they showed you mercy. Find a way to thank that person for their merciful heart. *Examples:* write them a note, call them, invite them to hang out and thank them in person, etc.

THE REBELLION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Numbers 13:1–2, 30–33; 14:1–4, 30–35

THE REBELLION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Rebellion against God is rooted in failing to trust God.

JESUS CONNECTION

God's people failed to trust God's provision and promises by rebelling against Him and refusing to enter the land He had given them. Jesus fully trusted and obeyed the Father when He entered the world to fulfill God's promise to provide a Savior from sin.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONFIDENCE – Full trust and assurance in the reliability of a person or thing.

HEAD

What, specifically, caused the Israelites' confidence in God to fail?

How did God respond to the Israelites' refusal to enter the land?

HEART

The Bible is full of God's promises, and He is faithful to keep them, no matter what. God promised to bring Israel into the Promised Land, so Caleb & Joshua trusted that God would help Israel defeat and conquer the land. What part of God's character or promises do you need to remember that will help you fully trust Him to bring about what He has planned for you?

When have you had to trust someone you knew? What about someone you did not know? How can knowing God better help us have faith (show confidence) in Him?

HANDS

On a scale of 1–10, with 1 being no confidence and 10 being ultimate confidence, how would you rate your trust in God and His plans?

If you would like that number to become higher, write down one person you will commit to approaching and asking for their help to do that (LifeWise teacher, friend, pastor, parent, etc.). If you are satisfied with where you are on that scale, thank God for all He has done for you. Then, write down the names of two people you could encourage by sharing the amazing things God has done for you.

THE PROMISE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

Deuteronomy 31:14–23; 32:44–47

THE PROMISE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

God warns of the consequences of unfaithfulness to Him.

JESUS CONNECTION

Despite the people's ongoing sinful rebellion, God promised to be with them and provided them with words of life. Jesus is the Word of God who paid the penalty of our sin so that we might have life and relationship with God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COMMITMENT – Doing what I say I'll do.

HEAD

What did God say the people would do after they settled in the land of Canaan? What promise does God make Joshua, despite this?

What two things does Moses encourage the Israelites to do in order to help them remain committed to God?

HEART

When Moses reminded the people of God's covenant, they said, "Yes! We'll do it all." But they continued to fall short of keeping their commitment. Have you ever said you would do something (clean your room, complete your homework on time, go to church, help a grandparent, etc.) and fell short of keeping that commitment? Why are you unable to keep your commitments at times?

God told Moses before he even died that the people would not stay committed to Him. God is not surprised by our sins or failures either. Jesus came to die so that our sins could be covered. How does it encourage you that God knows you aren't perfect and has already provided the perfect answer to your failures?

HANDS

As we depend on God, He will help us follow through on all the things we promise to do. Name one commitment you have made that you are struggling to keep. Ask God to help you be strong and courageous, and remember that He is with you always as you work to fulfill your commitment. Ask someone to keep you accountable. Have that person check in with you to make sure you are doing what you said you will do.

THE PROMISE OF VICTORY

Joshua 2:8–13; 6:15–17, 20–25

THE PROMISE OF VICTORY

God responds to whoever calls on His mercy.

JESUS CONNECTION

Rahab recognized God's future victory and asked the spies to spare her from the coming destruction. When Jericho fell, Rahab received mercy and was included as one of God's chosen people. Whoever trusts in Jesus and asks Him for mercy is spared from the judgment of sin and welcomed into God's family.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

BOLDNESS – Choosing to do the right thing, even if you are afraid.

HEAD

Name 2 specific ways Rahab showed boldness in today's lesson.

What were some possible risks the Israelite troops could have feared as they marched and shouted around Jericho's walls?

HEART

What gave Rahab the courage to be fearless and act despite the possible risks?

Like Rahab and the people of Israel discovered, bold things are usually also scary things. Why do you think fear and boldness often go together? Do you think we can totally eliminate fear in these situations?

HANDS

God will call us to live boldly. He might prompt us to talk about Him with someone or do the right thing when others are doing wrong. What have you been avoiding because you are afraid or because of the possible risks associated with it? Write down the fears and/or risks. Talk to God about each one and ask Him to give you boldness to do what He is prompting you to do.

THE PICTURES OF GOD'S AUTHORITY

1 Kings 17:1–4, 10–24

LESSON TITLE

God's grace often comes in unexpected ways.

JESUS CONNECTION

The miracles Elijah performed revealed that he was a prophet of the one true God and that the Lord's words were true. In a greater way, the miracles Jesus performed revealed that He is the Son of God, the true Word of God (John 20:30-31).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

TRUSTWORTHINESS – Being able to be relied upon.

HEAD

What was the first miracle the widow experienced that grew her trust in God and Elijah?

Summarize what the widow said to Elijah after she witnessed the miracle with her son.

HEART

What has God done to show He is trustworthy? Why does knowing who God is and what He has done help us to trust Him?

Did Elijah know why God allowed the little boy to get sick and die? Why do you think he was able to trust God even when he didn't understand God's plan?

HANDS

We tend to rely on things or people rather than God when we need something or when things go wrong. Make a short list of some of the things or people we turn to. For each person or thing on your list, write one reason why they are less trustworthy than God. Ask God to help you remember to rely on Him more than anything or anyone else.

THE GIFTS OF GOD'S POWER

1 Kings 19:19–21; 2 Kings 2:6–15

THE GIFTS OF GOD'S POWER

God empowers His people to carry out His mission.

JESUS CONNECTION

When Elisha became God's prophet after Elijah, he asked for the same spirit that was in Elijah to be given to him. God granted Elisha's request and revealed His presence through a miracle. Years later when Jesus prepared His followers to begin their ministry, He instructed them to wait for the Holy Spirit, who came upon them and confirmed His presence in miraculous ways.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

WHOLEHEARTEDNESS – Complete dedication in everything I do.

HEAD

What did Elisha give up in order to demonstrate he would wholeheartedly follow Elijah?

When Elijah told Elisha to stay while he went to the Jordan river, how did Elisha continue to show his dedication to Elijah?

HEART

Which of these tasks and activities do you do or would do wholeheartedly?

- Homework
- Plan a surprise party for your friend
- Serve in the preschool ministry at church
- Mow the lawn
- Practice your sport or instrument

Why are some of those activities easier to do with all your heart than others?

Elisha didn't know exactly what was in store for him when he immediately followed Elijah. Do you think knowing the outcome makes it easier to go all in on something? Explain.

HANDS

Elisha followed Elijah with his whole heart because he wanted to serve God. Think of one thing you could give up in order to be more wholehearted in following God. (*Examples:* social media, an unhealthy relationship, video games, etc.). Commit to letting go of one of your distractions and use the extra time and space to learn more about who God is and how to follow Him.

THE VISION OF GOD'S STRENGTH

2 Kings 6:8–23

THE VISION OF GOD'S STRENGTH

Only God can open our eyes to see spiritual realities.

JESUS CONNECTION

Elisha prayed for the eyes of others to be opened so they could see God at work around them. Likewise, Jesus came to give sight to the blind—physically and spiritually—so that they could see that He is Immanuel—God with us.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

KINDNESS – Being considerate, generous and compassionate towards others.

HEAD

How did God protect Elisha when the Aramean king sent his army to capture him?

After the Aramean army was captured and brought to the king of Israel, the king asked Elisha if he should kill them. How did Elisha respond?

HEART

We see God's kindness toward Israel's enemies in this passage. Since God is kind to people who do not deserve it, we can also be kind to our enemies. What is one way you could show kindness to someone who is in one of your classes and continually tries to get you in trouble? How would they react if you did this?

Do you consider kindness to be powerful or weak? Explain.

HANDS

Many times, God shows us kindness when we do not expect it. He will provide what we need, protect us, heal us or give us unexpected blessings. Think of a person in your school, family or community who showed you kindness when you did not deserve or expect it. Write them a letter thanking them for what they did for you. Let them know how it made you feel and what kind of impact it had on you to do the same for others. Send or deliver the letter.

A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE RECEIVE MERCY

Jonah 1:1–4, 17; 2:10–3:5, 10; 4:1, 8–11

A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE RECEIVE MERCY

God's grace can extend to even those we consider enemies.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jonah was a prophet who rejected God's call, ran from his enemies and eventually obeyed grudgingly. Jesus followed God's call, loved His enemies, and obeyed joyfully (Hebrews 12:2). While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COMPASSION – Recognizing the suffering of others and taking action to help.

HEAD

List everyone to whom God demonstrated compassion in the story of Jonah.

How did Jonah show a lack of compassion to those same people?

HEART

God is merciful and shows compassion even when we don't deserve it. Is compassion easy for you to share or do you tend to want to reserve it for those you think "deserve" it?

Why might recognizing God's compassion for us make it easier to show compassion to others?

HANDS

Compassion means seeing suffering and doing what you can to help. But suffering isn't always big and obvious. Think about the people in your family, school or community who might be hurting in small ways and brainstorm ways you can help them. Commit to acting on those ideas this week.

AN UNFAITHFUL PEOPLE RECEIVE LOVE

Hosea 2:16–23; 3:1–5; 14:1–4

AN UNFAITHFUL PEOPLE RECEIVE LOVE

God faithfully pursues His people even when they are unfaithful.

JESUS CONNECTION

Hosea's relationship with Gomer reminds us of God's relationship with the people of Israel and with us. Even though God's people are unfaithful and love many other things more than Him, God still loves us. It was because of God's love that He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sin and bring us back to Him.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

LOVE – Choosing to support and care for others whether or not they deserve it.

HEAD

What action did Hosea take to show his love for Gomer?

God told Hosea to continue to go after and love Gomer when she left him and was unfaithful. Hosea had to pay to get her back since she had fallen into slavery. Hosea supported and cared for Gomer no matter what. Compare the relationship between Hosea and Gomer to God and Israel. How are they similar?

HEART

God told Hosea to continue to go after and love Gomer when she was unfaithful. How are the relationships between Hosea and Gomer & God and Israel similar?

God's love is affectionate and caring, but it is also a *choosing* love. His devoted love involves willing pursuit and necessary sacrifice for the sake of the one being loved. When we experience God's deep love, how might it change how we respond to Him and to others?

HANDS

Romans 8:38–39 says, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

That means there is nothing you have done, should have done or that's been done to you that can keep God from loving YOU! Even when you run away or are unfaithful to God, He will run after you because He loves you and wants to be in a committed relationship with you.

Create something (a song, a poem, a piece of art, a letter, a game, a presentation, collage, etc.) to express Romans 8:38–39. Be creative. Take a picture of it to show or bring it in to share with your LifeWise class. Then, either give it to someone who needs to know they are dearly loved by God or keep it to remind you of this unshakeable truth.

AN IDOLATROUS PEOPLE RECEIVE JUDGMENT

2 Kings 17:6–20

AN IDOLATROUS PEOPLE RECEIVE JUDGMENT

God's loving discipline is meant to lead us to repentance.

JESUS CONNECTION

The people of Israel sinned against God and worshiped idols. God warned them to turn from their evil ways and obey Him, but they refused and were disciplined by Him. Israel's rebellion reminds us of our idolatry and need for Jesus who perfectly obeyed God and was punished in our place.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

PATIENCE – Being willing to wait.

HEAD

What emotional reaction did God have in response to His people's disobedience?

God waited hundreds of years to punish Israel for their sin. According to 2 Peter 3:9, why did God wait so long?

HEART

God is good and merciful. He is patient and kind even when we continue to make choices He knows will hurt us or Him. How does knowing those characteristics about Him affect the choices you make? Or does it?

God wanted the Israelites to turn from their wicked ways, but He was patient with them. How can you show patience and kindness to others, even when they frustrate you or make mistakes? How do you think others would react if they saw you being patient in those ways during a frustrating situation?

HANDS

Patience is hard to learn and even harder to do. Often, we simply rush toward whatever outcome or result we want. But we can be patient with ourselves and others because we know God cares for us and is at work in our lives. He will help us develop patience to wait for Him in hard situations and in everyday life.

Read the scenarios below. Choose the one that is most difficult for you to show patience in. Write 2 action steps you can take to practice patience in that area.

- Waiting on an item you ordered that you really want
- Understanding why your friend hurt you again
- Waiting for God to answer your prayer
- Not yelling at your sibling when you are angry
- Waiting your turn for something
- Practicing a skill (a sport, playing an instrument, learning a language, art, etc.)

GOD PROMISES A SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 52:13–53:12

GOD PROMISES A SUFFERING SERVANT

Jesus is the Suffering Servant who was rejected and struck down on our behalf.

JESUS CONNECTION

God gave Isaiah a message to deliver to His people. God promised to send a faithful Servant who would be rejected and despised and yet accomplished salvation through His suffering. The New Testament shows that this prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus and His work.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SACRIFICE – Giving of myself to help someone else.

HEAD

Isaiah predicted the suffering of the Messiah over 700 years before it happened. According to Isaiah 52 and 53, how would the Messiah be mistreated?

What good came of Jesus' suffering and death?

HEART

Jesus went through extreme suffering and pain in order to be a "successful servant" (Isaiah 52:13). What does that mean?

When God's love fills our hearts, that love makes it possible for us to give up what's important to us for someone else's good. What would it take for you to be a successful servant? Could you give up something you value (time, money, possessions, passions, worldly success) to do something for others? What might that look like?

HANDS

Jesus told His disciples, "No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus gave His life as a willing sacrifice. We admire people who do the same. We love stories and movies about real-life events where someone sacrifices, sometimes even their lives, to save others.

Think of a particular person or an occupation people have that demonstrates this kind of sacrifice. Write a note of appreciation or think of a gesture of appreciation you can do for that person or group. Be sure to send or give it to them.

GOD RECEIVES THE PEOPLE'S REPENTANCE

2 Chronicles 34:1–11, 14–15, 18–21

GOD RECEIVES THE PEOPLE'S REPENTANCE

True repentance leads to worship and obedience.

JESUS CONNECTION

Josiah was a good king whom God used to lead the people back to Him, but he was not the perfect king that the people needed. Jesus is the righteous King of kings who brings us to God by paying our sin penalty and giving us His righteousness.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

RESPONSIBILITY – Taking ownership of my choices and behavior, including the consequences.

HEAD

What steps did Josiah take to get rid of idol worship in Judah?

God's law had not been read or taught for many years. Where did the priests find it? What was Josiah's response when he heard God's Word?

HEART

Josiah's father and grandfather had not worshiped God. But Josiah chose to follow Him and do the right thing. Do you think everyone agreed with his changes?

Why is it hard to follow God by yourself? Why would having family, friends or church members who also follow God help you do the right thing?

HANDS

We cannot force people to do the right thing, whether that means following God or making good choices or stopping a harmful behavior. But we all have influence. What are some practical ways you can use your words and actions to positively influence those in your circle to follow God and live life His way?

GOD DECLARES A NEW COVENANT

Jeremiah 31:31–40

GOD DECLARES A NEW COVENANT

God writes His law on our hearts and sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us.

JESUS CONNECTION

Despite having God's law, God's people were still unable to obey Him because of the sinfulness of their hearts. The prophet Jeremiah told about a coming day when God would write His law on His people's hearts and provide lasting forgiveness of sin. When we trust in Jesus' work on the cross and allow the Holy Spirit to work within us, God forgives us and enables us to obey His commands.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

FORGIVENESS – Erasing a debt that another person owes me.

HEAD

What was God basing His covenant and promise of forgiveness on—the people's obedience or His own faithfulness? Why is that good news for us?

The people were living in times of political upheaval and cultural unrest. God could have promised them peace and prosperity, but He didn't. What did God promise them?

HEART

Forgiveness is a necessary ingredient for strong relationships. How does forgiveness help restore a broken relationship?

Is forgiveness by itself enough to make everything right again?

How might God's willingness to forgive you because of Jesus affect how you react to those who hurt you?

HANDS

An apology is often the first step to asking for and giving forgiveness. An effective apology has four parts:

- The words "I'm sorry."
- A clear explanation of the offense: "I'm sorry for speaking to you so unkindly."
- An acknowledgement of harm: "I know I hurt your feelings."
- A request for forgiveness: "Please forgive me," or "Will you forgive me?"

How good are you at apologizing? How good are you at receiving an apology and offering forgiveness?

Write out an apology for something you know you need to ask forgiveness for. Ask God for the courage and opportunity to offer that apology to the one you hurt.

GOD ANSWERS A CONFUSED PROPHET

Habakkuk 1:2–6, 12–13; 2:3–4; 3:16–19

GOD ANSWERS A CONFUSED PROPHET

Joy is rooted in a relationship with God, not circumstances.

JESUS CONNECTION

Habakkuk lived at a time when evil seemed to be everywhere. By faith, he trusted God's promise that God would deliver His people. Injustice, violence and wickedness surround us today, but we can live by faith and trust that Jesus will return one day to make all things right.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

JOY – Having a cheerful response regardless of my circumstances.

HEAD

Habakkuk struggled to understand what God was doing. He began to doubt God as he witnessed the violence and injustice all around him. But by the end of the passage (3:17–19), how was Habakkuk responding?

Did Habakkuk's circumstances change? What was his response rooted in?

HEART

What is the difference between happiness and joy? Why do we pursue happiness instead of joy?

The world is full of evil. If we haven't already experienced it, we will someday, probably soon. God's interaction with Habakkuk gave him joy in the face of great difficulty. What is your response to God's answers to Habakkuk?

HANDS

Rewrite Habakkuk 3:17–18. Replace Habakkuk's imagery in verse 17 with scenarios from our day and age (example: "Though no one shares a single post of mine on social media"), but copy verse 18 exactly. Hang it up where you can see it daily and ask God to help you rejoice in Him no matter what.

GOD DISCIPLINES A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE

2 Chronicles 36:11–21

GOD DISCIPLINES A REBELLIOUS PEOPLE

God patiently pursues sinners, but those who harden their hearts will one day face judgment.

JESUS CONNECTION

God righteously punished His people for their sin, but He remained faithful to them and kept the promise He had made to David to preserve a remnant and provide a king. Ultimately, Jesus defeated sin on the cross and is our King forever.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HUMILITY – Refusing to think of myself as more important than I am.

HEAD

Who pleaded with Zedekiah to return to the Lord? How did Zedekiah respond to this advice?

Zedekiah pursued his own greatness because of his pride. What were the consequences of this lack of humility?

HEART

If we declare that we believe in God and want to put our faith in Him, He becomes our one true God, whom we serve and follow. He is our King. Therefore, we shouldn't act like we are better, wiser or more important than God.

Are there times when you become so focused on yourself, your accomplishments, your possessions or how good you are at something that you forget God is the author of all of it?

Choose one of those things (an accomplishment, possession or talent) and write down how you could use it to serve someone else instead of getting praise for yourself.

Do you think of yourself as a prideful person? Think of a time when a teacher, coach, pastor or parent gave you some advice to help you do better or to correct what you were doing. Did you carefully listen, thank them and try to do better? Or did you get angry, roll your eyes, shrug it off and continue as you were? If the latter, how could you have responded with more humility?

HANDS

Pride is a very destructive force. Zedekiah's pride led to the utter destruction of Judah and Jerusalem. Thankfully, pride does not have to control us. If we listen and apply wise counsel from others, look to serve others and remember that God is responsible for all that we have, we will be on our way to eliminating pride in our lives. Out of those three things, which one will you commit to improving? Write how you will do that.

GOD PICTURES A FUTURE HOPE

Ezekiel 37:1–6, 16–17, 20–28

GOD PICTURES A FUTURE HOPE

God's Word is capable of bringing life where there is none.

JESUS CONNECTION

God gave Ezekiel a vision of God's promise to bring life out of death and to restore His broken and scattered people. Ezekiel's vision was fulfilled through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the King who gives life and will rule over a unified people from every nation, tribe, people and language (Rev. 7:9).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HOPE – Expecting God will do what is best in every situation.

HEAD

In today's Bible passage, we read about a scene from the prophet Ezekiel that is full of both despair and hope. What did God show Ezekiel to represent despair?

What good news did God deliver to Ezekiel to give him hope?

HEART

Had God rescued the Israelites from seemingly impossible situations in the past? If so, why did they doubt God in this situation?

When we find ourselves in impossible situations, it's easy to focus on the circumstances. And God doesn't always change our circumstances. However, He always offers us hope. Hope means we step back and get the bigger picture of who God is and what He might be doing.

Based on God's words to Ezekiel, what can we expect God can and will do even when our situation doesn't change?

HANDS

The Lord brought His prophet to a valley full of dry bones to show him the hopelessness of life in exile, but also to reveal the power of God to raise the dead and restore His people. The vision gave hope to the people in Ezekiel's day that God would bring them back to their land.

In order to help a friend, relative or someone you know have hope in a difficult situation, read or share today's story with them. Give them your thoughts on what you know about "expecting," trusting or believing God will do what is best in every situation.